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A
SERMON
Preach'd before the
KING

AT
WHITE-HALL,
ON

Tuesday, November the 5th. 1700.

By *William Fleetwood*,
Chaplain in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

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A
S E R M O N
Preach'd before the
K I N G, &c.

St. Matthew, Chap. xxiii. Vers. 15.

Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye compass Sea and Land, to make One Proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the Child of Hell than yourselves.

OUR Saviour being sent of God, to reform the World in general, and in particular the great Corruptions that had over-spread the Jews his own People, both in their Practice and Opinion; found the greatest Opposition to his good Design, from the Scribes and Pharisees, who being in great Reputation with the common People, for

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their most scrupulous precise observance of all the Traditions of the Elders, and a seeming Austerity of Life and Manners, led them wherever they pleased, and prejudiced them exceedingly against his Doctrine, and his Person. He therefore sets himself to undeceive these People, and let them know, what false and wicked Men these their Guides and Directors were, and how unworthy of their Admiration and Esteem: that they were not in the least, the Men they would appear to be; but endeavoured, in all their Actions, to make a fine shew of Zeal and Holiness, without any Truth or Substance at the bottom; and cover'd very bad Designs under these Masques, and fair pretences. Upon this account it is, that in all his denunciations of Wo and Wrath, to the Scribes and Pharisees; he also adds, that they were *Hypocrites*. He says, *They bound heavy burthens, and grievous to be born, on other peoples shoulders, but would not themselves move them with one of their fingers*; laid heavy Penances on Others that offended, and told them a world of things were absolutely necessary, but liv'd themselves at ease, free from that discipline: *that all they did, was to be seen of Men*, and to receive their Praise and Honour, living wholly to the World, and its Applause and Interest, without any good Design, in any thing they undertook. Amongst other
Reproofs,

Reproofs, this of the Text is One ; that the very Zeal which they shew'd in converting Gentiles to the Jewish Faith, was at the bottom stark naught, and tended only to the greater Mischief of those poor People who were converted by them. *Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites ; for ye compass Sea and Land, to gain One Profelyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the Child of Hell, than yourselves.*

Which words we will, *First*, Consider in themselves. *Secondly*, See, what Use we may make of them : And *Lastly*, Make what Application may be proper to this present Occasion.

1. Of the words in themselves. *To make a Profelyte*, is to gain One over to our Party, or Opinion : and for a Jew to make a Profelyte, was, to convert a Gentile from his belief and worship of many Gods, to the belief and worship of the One and only true God, and call'd by the *Jews*, the God of *Israel*. Some there were, who were thus converted, and went no farther ; others were perswaded to embrace the Jewish Faith, in all its Branches ; to be circumcised, and to keep the whole Law of *Moses*, and to be made, thereby, partakers of all the Blessings promised by God to *Abraham's* Children. The first of these were indeed Profelytes to Sense and Reason, and returned to Natural Religion, rather than Pro-

selytes to the Jewish Faith, any farther than that the belief of One God was the Chief Article of it, and that a *Jew* became the happy Instrument of bringing them to Reason. It is therefore very probable, that the Proselytes of which our Saviour speaks in this place, were of the latter sort, such as were circumcised, and submitted to all the Law of *Moses*, and whatever else of Rites and Ceremonies, Customs and Traditions, were then held necessary at home, and preach'd abroad by these new Missionaries. *To compass Sea and Land*, is, to take great Pains, to labour hard, and go a great way, to undergo much Difficulty, and much Hazard, as they who make great Voyages by Sea, and Journeys by Land, are wont to do. *To make One, twofold more a Child of Hell, than himself*, is to leave him in a worse Condition than you found him, by a great deal: to make him wicked, and consequently much more liable to Punishment.

We must see a little into the meaning of this. The bringing Gentiles from the worship of many Gods to the worship of One and the true One, was certainly a good Work, and therefore is not here condemn'd, we may be sure, by Christ; and the bringing them to the Jewish Faith, to the believing all that *Moses* and the Prophets had said, was still better; for thither our Saviour himself remits
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the *Jews*, when they would know, *who*, and *what* he was, Search the Scriptures, saith he, for in them ye think ye have eternal Life, and they are they, which testify of Me. This was the best preparation they could make, to receive him as the *Messiah*, promised by God to the Fathers, and spoken of by *Moses* and the Prophets; here the particulars both of his Life and Death were to be found; and upon this Account, the *Jews* who had these Scriptures in their hands, and were oblig'd to read them carefully, are much more faulty in rejecting the *Messiah*, than others could be, who heard of no such Writings, nor receiv'd them as inspired Books; and therefore knew of no such Promises, or Predictions, to be fulfill'd; the converting therefore of Gentiles to the belief of *Moses* and the Prophets, was the best disposition they could put them in, for entertaining the *Messiah* when they should see him coming: and therefore the Zeal of these Converting Missionaries, as far as it intended, and effected this, was good, and was not condemn'd by Christ, we may be confident. And because the *Jews* were themselves circumcis'd by God's Appointment, and express Command, and could not otherwise be call'd *Jews*, nor enter into Covenant with God, nor be partakers of the Blessings, and peculiar Privileges, promis'd them, as such; 'tis very probable, they must induce the Converts
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they intended to make, that they might be partakers of the same Promises, to enter into the same Covenant, by the same way, the *Jews* did, namely, by being Circumcised; and consequently they must become *Debtors to the whole Law*, and conform exactly to all its Rites and Ceremonies, as the Original *Jews* did. Nor does there appear any thing blame-worthy in all this; for besides that, Christ himself submitted to Circumcision, and observ'd the Law of *Moses*, we find not any where, that he condemn'd any One, for doing the like. And tho' he intended to abrogate that initiating Sacrament, and all the Ceremonial Law of *Moses*, in its proper time, and might therefore think such Conversions to Judaism at such a time, and so near the Period he would put to it, not very seasonable or necessary; yet 'tis not to be thought, he would condemn with such severity and sharpness, the Zeal of such as should attempt to convert the Gentiles to perfect Judaism, which *they* thought necessary, and he himself had not as yet declar'd against, or disapproved.

Since, then, the Scribes and Pharisees, were not themselves the Children of Hell, for their being *Jews*, and for believing *Moses* and the Prophets, submitting to Circumcision, and observing the whole Law; we are not to think, their Proselytes and Converts, became Children of Hell,
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by becoming *Jews*, and much less doubly so, and worse than their Converters. But we must needs remember, that the Scribes and Pharisees, are every where represented by Christ, as the great Corrupters of the Jewish Faith. They had sogloss'd, and commented upon the Scriptures, that Truth was obscur'd and lost under them: they had so darkned Prophecies, that they had wholly laid aside the expectation of their Completion, at their proper times and seasons, or applied them so to other matters, that the People were diverted to Objects, they had nothing to do with, and could not look to the things that most concern'd them: they had superinduc'd such a world of Rites and Ceremonies, to those that *Moses* had commanded them, (which one would have thought had been enow) that *Moses* would himself have hardly known his own Institution; and they were intolerably troublesome by a most fanciful significance, and became through weakness and superstitious fear, so necessary in the most common Actions of Life, that they were look'd upon as parts of their Religion; and Men became defil'd and abominable by Neglect of them, and pure and holy by a nice Observance of them: they had made such an Exposition on the Commandments, that a Man might almost keep every one of them in breaking them. Our Saviour tells them,

them, they had made *them of none effect, through their traditions*: and a great part of his Business was, to bring them again to their Old Sense and Signification; his Sermons were divided betwixt *Ye have heard of old, and—but I say unto you otherwise.*

In a Word, The Corruptions that reigned, and had done so a great while before, amongst the *Jews*, were incredibly great, and most deplorable. And, in truth, their Practice went hand in hand with them; their Doctrines were exactly calculated for Ease and Liberty, and for Indulgence to Vice and all Enormities. Our Saviour hated Sin, with the most mortal Hatred, because he knew the Mischief that it did to those he loved, and knew what it, at length, would cost him; but never did a holy Prophet treat Sinners with more Mildness, Pity, and Good-Nature, with less Upbraidings and Reproaches, than he, where he discern'd the least Relenting, Tenderness, or Inclination to Goodness. And therefore, one may easily believe, That where he is moved to speak the sharpest and severest things, and to denounce such Wo and Wrath, there was the greatest Cause, and justest Provocation for it, that could be; and therefore we may well conclude, the Scribes and Pharisees were certainly the worst and wickedest of Men.

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This we may take for granted, because the Gospels are so full of it.

But what is the Connexion betwixt *their* being so wicked, and their *Profelytes* being as bad, or much worse? with some Probability this, — that they who were themselves so tainted and corrupted both in Principles and Practice, would infuse the same corrupt Principles into their Disciples, and form them to the same Practice with themselves. They would deliver them the Law of *Moses*, the Lessons of the Prophets, and the Sum of the *Jewish* Faith, as they themselves had learnt it, with all the false Glosses, trifling Comments, unwarrantable Additions, wicked Distinctions, Relaxations, Dispensations of Duty, Commutations for Neglect; and, in a Word, with the whole corrupted Mass of their Traditions; which made the Jewish Church, at this Time, such an Abomination to Christ. There was all the Likelihood in the World, that People so very loose and wicked, would propagate their Errors and Corruptions; and the Disciples then must needs be as wicked as their Masters.

To say the Profelytes would be *twofold more* the Children of Hell, than they who made them Profelytes, is an exaggerating Speech, and rather condemns the Masters than the Scholars: They who pretended so much Zeal, would teach the Gentiles such a Doctrine as would leave them

worse than it found them ; it would pervert their very natural Principles: and that which true Reason would instruct them in, and urge them to do, would be defeated by Traditions of their Masters, and false Expositions of Commandments which came indeed from God.

I will give an Instance or two of this, because it is of Moment. We are made by God, by standing in need of one anothers Assistance, to love one another, and to do each other all good Offices, in this we are instructed by the Light of Nature, and when we are secure our selves, we need no Command of God, to carry us to the helping others in Distress; we do it of our own accord, and condemn our selves in the Neglect of it, if we cannot make some good Excuse. This natural Obligation the *Jews* deliver'd themselves from, by expounding some Commands of God, which forbade them closer Commerce than ordinary with idolatrous Nations, for fear of being infected with their abominable Practices, to such a rigorous and unreasonable Extremity of keeping Distance, that they would not so much as do the common Offices of Humanity to any but *Jews*; they would see a Heathen perish for want of necessaries, rather than supply him with them; they would not so much as look kindly, nor speak a good word, much less bestow a Benefit on any one but *Jews*. They were remarkable for their morose, and sullen, and
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ill-natur'd Manners, and were equally hated and despised by all the World that knew them. This was not owing to Nature nor to Gods Commands, if rightly understood, but to a false and corrupt Exposition of them, begun in Error, and continu'd on by naughty Custom, and became in time a venerable Tradition.

That which follows is much worse. The Light of Nature reaches all the World, without a positive Command of God, to succour and support our Parents in Necessity, whether driven to it by Age, Infirmities, by Losses or Misfortunes; 'tis certainly our common Duty to do it, and nothing can dispense with it, according to our Abilities: but the *Jews* determin'd, that if a Man had devoted his Estate to the Use of the Temple, or any part of Gods Service, he was then acquitted of his Duty to his Parents: and if they came to him in never so great Distress, and begg'd his Help, he might answer them, No, *it is Corban*, that Estate with which I might have profited you, is dedicated now to God by Vow, and I can do you no farther Service. Thus, saith our Lord, *have ye made the Commands of God, of no effect or Obligation, by your Traditions.* These are plain Instances how the Light of Nature may be extinguish'd by pretended Revelation: and as plain Proofs that such a reveal'd Religion (*i. e.* corrupted so) is worse than *Gentilism*; corrupting their natural Notions of

Good and Evil, and putting them on Practices, that Reason, whilst untainted, would abhor.

But if these words are to be understood exactly in the Letter, that the Profelytes would become much worse than they who gain'd them over, (of which I think there is no necessity) then we may say, that so our Saviour saw it would actually be, tho' he assign'd no reason why it would be so: but this we also may ourselves observe, that so it sometimes happens, that People exceed their Masters and Corrupters, in their own wicked way; and out-do their Originals, becoming themselves Examples, and great Models of Perfection, in corrupt and sinful Practices. But as it is easier much, so it is more probable, to think, our Saviour intended, by this severe and angry Scheme of Speech, to say the Scribes and Pharisees, notwithstanding all their Zeal for Conversion of Gentiles, had better have let them alone, for that, being themselves so abominably Corrupt, they could not but make their Profelytes more wicked than they found them, and as bad as themselves, and consequently make them liable to greater Wrath and Punishment, than they had been, had they continued in their Ignorance and Darkness.

II. Let us see, in the second place, what Use we may make of these Matters. And that will be, at this time, to observe these Two things: *First*, That wicked Men may be as full of Zeal, as good ones,

ones, to propagate their Errors and Corruptions. And *Secondly*, That therefore Zeal is not of itself to be regarded, but with Respect to the *End* it aims at, the *Means* it uses to accomplish the End, and the *Effect* that is like to follow.

First, Wicked Men may be as full of Zeal, as good Ones, to propagate their Errors and Corruptions. These Scribes and Pharisees so often call'd upon by Christ (and always for their Faults) were full of Zeal, for converting Gentiles; and this is the more observable, in that there is no Command in all the Jewish Law, obliging the *Jews* to labour for the Conversion of the Gentiles, a certain Sign, this Law was not intended to be the standing Rule, and the Religion of the whole World. There is indeed provision made in several places of the Law, how to receive and use *Strangers*, in case they were willing to become *Jews*; and in the 60th. of *Isaiah*, there is a large Prophecy, that Kings, and Nations, and many People should be gather'd to them; which may partly be applied to the Jewish State, before Christ's coming, tho' much more properly and truly to the Church of Christ. But there was no Command of God to set the *Jews* upon this Work of gaining them: and therefore the Zeal of doing it was so much greater, in being voluntary; and moreover, this their Zeal was accompanied with many Difficulties and Hazards, it cost them Time, and Pains,

Pains, and much Money ; such Undertakings require them all ; *they compass Sea and Land to gain a Profelyte.* No dangers frightned them, they left their Native Country, their Parents and Relations, their Ease, Estate, and all Conveniencies of Life, to enter on a strange Climate, unusual Diet, and a new way of living ; they ventur'd on unknown Countries, People of a new Tongue, new Customs, and new Manners ; and it may be where there were inhospitable Laws, and rigorous Edicts against Foreigners, and Death itself denounc'd to such as would dare to decry the Religion, Gods, and Worship of the Country, and introduce a new Superstition ; but neither the Storms and Tempests in their Passage, nor Death in all its frightful Shapes at Sea, nor all the Hazards of their Landing, and Continuing in a strange Country, could hinder them from coming to Convert them : No Considerations could abate their Zeal : the desire they had of doing them the greatest Good imaginable, carried it above their Security and Self-Love, and private Interest, and all their Fears of Death and Danger.

Here is One among us that pretends to preach up Reformation, and exclaims upon the great Corruption of Faith and Manners that prevails among us, and especially his Superiours, the Scribes, and Pharisees, and Elders : He pretends above all others, that his sole Aim is the Glory of God,
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and the good of Mankind: but, do the Pains he takes, the Hardships he sustains, his tedious Journeyings by Land, or his perilous Voyages by Sea, do these give Testimony to his Zeal and good Designs? Are these like the laborious and hazardous Undertakings of the Scribes and Pharisees, who compass Sea and Land to make a Profelyte, who think that all is well bestowed, if they can gather up but one poor straying Sheep into the Fold of God's Church?

This was the Zeal of those, against whom the Wo in the Text is denounced: they were, with all this Zeal, most wicked and corrupt People; and, I think, I need not spend time, in shewing that Zeal is common to all Men, of all Parties and Conditions, and is never, in itself, a Token of either a good or a bad Man, or of a good or bad Cause, or Design; it is a natural fervour and warmth of Temper, rais'd higher than ordinary by some particular Considerations; and apt to be so rais'd, by that readines the Spirits and Blood are always in, to motion. And it has always been observ'd, that the worst Causes and Designs, have been pursued with the greatest degrees of Zeal, by the worst of Men: Whether it be, that good Men trust too far to the Truth and Justice of good Causes, believing their natural Force and Power to be much greater than they are; or that they think they are so much the Care and Protection

ction of God's Providence, that they may slacken their own diligence, and leave it to him to secure, who loves their Cause, and is very able to look after it, and very much obliged, they think, in Justice and Honour, to do it. Whatever it be that occasions it, 'tis commonly enough seen, that good People fall into Languors, Lukewarmness, and Indifference; and prosecute a good and righteous Cause, with more Remissness, and less Zeal, than is truly reasonable, or than becomes them: and that wicked People pursue their unjust Designs, and corrupt Interests, with such intention of Zeal, such Application, Diligence, and earnest Solicitation, that nothing can stand before them. Zeal therefore, of itself, tho' never so painful and laborious, and running never so great Hazards, is not to be regarded.

But, *in the Second place*, Respect must needs be had to the *End* it proposes, the *Means* it pitches on, and the *Effect* that is like to follow.

First, We must look to the *End* that Zeal proposes, whether it be good, or bad, or mixt: the Pretence may be God's Glory, and the Salvation of Souls, the bringing People to the knowledge of the Truth, and the correcting their bad Manners; this is an Excellent and Noble End, and worthy of all the Zeal, and Pains, and Hazard, that a Man can take, and run; but this must be well look'd into, for this is generally pretended

to by all Undertakers of Conversion, and makes their way clear before them ; and there is no doubt but the Scribes and Pharisees recommended themselves to their intended Profelytes by these Pretences, when yet, it we believe our Saviour, they thought of nothing less: They had other purposes, and were excited by other Motives, than God's Glory, and the good of Souls; they had their own Interest, and Vain-glory, and the making Parties. *I seek not yours, but you*, saith St. Paul to the *Corinthians*. But there are Missionaries, of another mind, that seek not Souls, but Gain, or Men for their Estates sake, and this is always to be well consider'd. Look well about, what sort of Countries these great Zealots chuse for Conquests, if it be *Tyre*, or *Sidon*, or *Damascus*, rich and trading Cities, or some obscure, and poor, tho' populous In land places; and to what sort of People they apply themselves, whether the noble, generous, and wealthy, or to the poor and meaner ones. Mark if their Children flock to *Swedeland*, *Denmark*, *Norway*, *Lapland*, *Russia*, or to the poorer quarters of *America*, with so much hast, and in such Numbers, as to *Mexico*, *Peru*, the *Eastern Indies*, and to *England*. See if the Glory of God, and good of Souls, make so much noise in the cold and barren North, as they do in warmer richer Climats, where Men reward as well as God, and yet where Souls are full as valuable, and dear to Him, as in the Land of *Havilah*, where there is Gold, and *Bdellium*, and the *Onyx-Stone*. Look therefore well to this, before you so com-

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mend the Zeal of those who compass Sea and Land, to make a Profelyte; see if there be no Interest at the bottom.

Another End that Men may have and serve by these Conversions, is Vain-glory, the pride and pleasure of being thought, and reported, so zealous of propagating the Conversion of the World. It is not to be thought, without searching carefully into the bottom of one's own heart, and observing narrowly the Principles and Practices of other People, what strange and difficult things, a Man's Vain-glory, and thirst of Fame and Commendation will put him upon, and make him undergo; what Pains and Labour he will be at, what Hardships he will sustain, for the reward of empty Praise and Admiration: the Glory of excelling other People, of being eminently singular, and distinguishing ones self from the common Mass, hath occasion'd Men to run a thousand hazards, both at Sea and Land, to do a thousand wonders, and has written at least a hundred thousand Books. Let us make good use of every thing we can, but this light Fancy, is a great ingredient in almost every human Composition. When we go to reason, and think in earnest, we can hardly have the confidence to charge any one, that he takes great pains and runs great hazard, to satisfy his Vain-glory, and to obtain the Praise of doing something that other People do not, without intending any other better end: when yet, if the Man would speak his mind freely, this principle is surely at the bot-

bottom. I make no other use of this sad Truth, at this time, than to suppose that Men may be stirr'd, even to undertake the best Designs, by the desire of Praise and Glory, Approbation and Esteem, and to be thought so zealous of God's honour and Man's good, as to venture Life and Liberty to promote 'em, without intending them in earnest. I see no reason to conclude better of the Missionaries concern'd in the Text, their whole design being to make a good Appearance, and to shew well to the World, and to be praised of Men : and the taking so much Pains, and running so much Hazard, by compassing Sea and Land to make a Profelyte, was as likely to make a shew of true Zeal, and gain them the Admiration of the World, as any thing else, those things being the *Tokens*, that Men are truly in earnest.

The making Parties, is also another End, that designing People may possibly aim at, even in making Converts ; this indeed does usually follow, whether Men design it or no, the Profelytes do generally adhere to their Converters Interest and Party, with great Good-will, with the utmost Zeal and Pertinacity; and are evermore the warmest in defending their New Choice, and in promoting it, and in withstanding, and bearing down all its Opposers. This was found true in the Apostles days ; and *Justin Martyr* complains of it in his ; and all Men have observ'd that the new Converts are still the forwardest, and most presumptuous, flaming with Zeal, as if they were to

redeem the time of their Ignorance past, make an atonement for their former opposition, or neglect of Truth, and by something extraordinary, convince the World of the sincerity and earnest of their Conversion, making such quick advances, and such forward paces, that they may never think of cooling and retiring. This temper is exceeding fit for Parties, and a rare Spirit, for pursuing worldly Interests: and therefore they who have designs of such a sort, to serve, cannot do better than to make as many Profelytes as they can to their Religion, who are thereby engag'd most deeply in their Interests.

Next to the *End* of Zeal, we are to consider the *Means* it uses to attain it: For true Religion will not be beholden to Evil, to obtain the good it aims at; it acts most uniformly with itself, and pitches upon means exactly just and honest; it pretends not to sanctify, by using them, means that are in themselves unhallowed and abominable; but takes the courses that are before acknowledg'd to be just, and reasonable and lawful, to compass its end by. If the Glory of God and the good of Souls, be the true end of those who would convert, and make Profelytes; the means must not be such as would dishonour God, and prejudice a Soul, disinterest'd and reasonable, against them. There must be nothing of falshood, cruelty, impurity, or impiety in them; for each of them are unworthy of God, and unbecoming a good Religion. There must be nothing contrary to our natural Notices; nothing

thing contrary to our Senses; nothing contrary to the common Notions all Men have of good and evil. Whoever, in a word, to bring a Man to his Religion, will use such means as that Religion does itself abhor and forbid, is not acted, certainly by the true Spirit of that Religion, but by mistaken Zeal, at least, if not some worse Principle. But because a Man, before he be a Profelyte, will hardly understand thorowly what that Religion forbids, or admits of, he will be safe enough in rejecting that Religion, that countenances Falshood, Inhumanity, impure Practices, or any thing that stands condemn'd by the Light of Nature, and the common Reason of Mankind.

And so, one may say, *in the last place*, if the easie, natural, or common *Effects* of the Principles of Religion be like to be dishonourable to God, and unworthy of so good a name, we may conclude against it, and condemn the Zeal that would promote it. For true Religion never can, in itself, or just Consequence, either dishonour God, or do Mischief to Mankind.

In passing our Judgment therefore upon Zeal, we must not barely regard the Pains it takes, nor the Hazards it runs, in Compassing Sea and Land to make Profelytes, but seriously respect the *End* it truly aims at (not what it pretends) the *Means* it uses to compass that End by, and the Effects that are likely to follow. All these things must be consider'd, when we would understand, whether the Zeal of making Profelytes, be truly good and laudable; for if either the *End* be naught,

naught, or the *Means* unlawful, or the natural *Effects* of such Conversion, be the Corruption of good Manners, the Pains and Labours of these Missionaries, and the Hazards they run, are no good Arguments in their behalf. For the Scribes and Pharisees took all these pains, and ventur'd all these Hazards, and yet were *Hypocrites: they compass'd Sea and Land, to make a Profelyte,* and all they did by it, was, that they made him worse than he was before, and worse, if it could be, *than Themselves.* This is the Use we may make, at this time, of these Words of Christ.

III. The Application of what has been said, to the Occasion of our present Meeting, may be this. We are to give God Thanks for the Deliverance of this Nation heretofore, from the Contrivance and Design of wicked Papists, to murder King and Prince, Bishops and Judges, Lords and Commons, met in Parliament, all at one Blow. A Work of the most devilish and deliberate Malice, quickest Execution, and most dreadful Consequence, that can be thought upon. And, in the next place, to give God Thanks for a Deliverance of the Nation, of a fresher Date, from the Designs of the same Party, to destroy the Established Church, (for they pretended Kindness to *the rest*, and they believ'd them) to overturn our Laws, and govern by a Force that we were Strangers to. Of these two Deliverances, the First was *accomplish'd* on this Day, by the Discovery of the *Powder-Plot.* The Second was *begun* by the King's Arrival on our Shoars,

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in order to preserve our Church, to settle and confirm our Laws, and to have us govern'd by them. These two Deliverances happening on the same day, we are to give God Thanks for both of 'em at the same time. Now both these dangerous Seasons, and all that came between them, were entirely owing to that intemperate, restless Zeal for Our Conversion, with which these Children of the Scribes and Pharisees, incessantly pursue us; and for which they compass Sea and Land. And since there is no Plea, that sooner makes them way, and gains them a more favourable Admission, nothing that prepossesses Peoples Minds with kinder Prejudice, than seeing the Voyages and Journeys that they take from foreign Countries, their Perils by Water, and Perils by Land, their Perils from Strangers, and Perils from their own Countrymen, from Clamour, and Ill-will, and Penal Laws, and all to gain a Soul to God, and the true Religion; I thought it not amiss, to shew you, what a Zeal the Scribes and Pharisees had to make Proselytes, in the like manner, and what Pains they also took to compass Sea and Land, for the same Purpose, and yet were Hypocrites themselves, and Corrupters of those they would convert; and that therefore Zeal alone was not to be regarded, without the Consideration of the End, the Means, and probable Effects of such Conversion. Let us, to save a little time, suppose these Emissaries, who are, in proper time and place, as sharp and avaricious as the Jews, or *Babian* Merchants, the Masters of Seduction,

on, Turbulence, and Faction, and the greatest Self-admirers in the World; let us suppose them, for once, to be, with respect to us, the most dis-interests'd, undesigning, open, modest, humble Men, that can be; and to have no other Aim or End, than the Glory of God, and the Salvation of *English Souls*: yet, what shall we do to justify the *Means* they take to compass this End by? Will the *Good End* sanctifie Falshood, Villany, and Treachery, the destruction of all our Liberties and Civil Rights, the Overthrow of all our Laws, and the delivering us up a Prey to the Insolence of arbitrary Power? And if this cannot be brought about by civil means, by artful Management, and methods of Persuasion; will it justify such wicked Courses, and such inhumane Cruelties, as were design'd this day, to put an End to so many great and precious Lives, among us? Was this the way to save the *Souls* of those intended Victims? Had they been purify'd by this strange Fire, and fitted for the Mercies of the Almighty? The *End*, I doubt, must be forgotten here, and this must be their way to bring their *Children* unto God, however ill it go with the poor Parents. But will the Children be inclin'd to think these means are proper for Conversion, and for begetting a good Opinion in them of the Religion to which they are invited? What sort of God is it, that is delighted with these humane Sacrifices? Does such a sanguinary Doctrine suit with Christ, who claims from God his Father, and from a soft and tender Virgin-Mother? Will
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Children be induc'd to leave the merciful good Principles of Natural Religion, for these most violent and brutal ones of a pretended Revelation? Can these abominable Cruelties make any other Impressions on the Standers by, than those of Hatred and Abhorrence, and a Resolution of flying from them as soon as possibly they can? The *Nero's* and the *Maximins*, the *Decii* and the *Dioclesians* thought this Way, and took these Methods to extirpate Christ's Religion; they were most happily mistaken. But who would think, that *Christians*, knowing this should fall in with the same courses, with just the contrary Design? Who would suspect Religion should be planted, settled, and confirm'd by Violence, by its great Friends, when its great Enemies use the same, to root it up, and destroy it? And yet we may defy the whole World to give us an Example, (one Example) where *Poper*y could, with its own security, have ruin'd and destroy'd such as would not submit themselves to it, and did not. *Poper*y is really an Usurpation on Christianity, and like Usurpers, lives within its Guards, Inquisitors and Dragoons; it settles and supports itself, by Gibbets, Axes, Halters, by Fire and Sword, and all the Instruments of Death, and cruel Executions. As I know there is no Encouragement to these Proceedings, from *Christ's Religion*, so I would only ask them Reparations for the great Scandal and Dishonours they do hereby to *Natural Religion*, and to the common Principles of Reason, and pure Humanity.

Let us see, in the last place, if the *Effects* be answerable to the *Pains* that are taken, for our Conversion, when they take Place. How is the matter mended with us? How is the Glory of God promoted, or the Good of Mankind, or the Salvation of Souls further'd? Do they tell us any thing of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that is contain'd in the Scriptures, which we did not believe before? Have they one Article of Faith, of Christs making, that we receive not equally with them? Or, in the point of Duty and good Morals, is there one Command of Christ that he enjoyns to do, but we acknowledg we should do it; or one thing he prohibits us, but what we own we should abstain from? To what new Rule must we submit and turn? If that be not true Christianity, to believe all that our Lord enjoyns us to believe, either by himself or his Apostles, to do whatever he commands, and to omit whatever he prohibits, to make the Word of God the Rule of Faith and Manners, to live in Union and Communion with our Pastors, Bishops, Priests and Deacons, rightly ordain'd, (even by our Adversaries themselves at first, if that will please) and in Love and Charity with one another; if this be not true Christianity, and indeed enough, where are we like to learn what is? and if it be, to what are we converted but to *Party*? Is God more honour'd by praying to Saints and Angels, than to him alone? Do we much glorifie our Lord, by making a thousand Mediators of Intercession for us, as well as He? Do we Honour and much Pleasure to a Jealous God, to pray to any

any of his Servants, for the same Favours and like Graces, that we ask of him? Does he regard us more for kneeling down and offering up our Prayers, not to say Incense, before an Idol or an Image? Does he delight rather to hear his People pray in an unknown Tongue, than with their Understanding? Or is he better pleased with the retrenching of the Cup, than with his own Institution? I have neither Mind nor Leisure to speak to the Particulars in which we differ, the Diminutions and the Additions they have made *from* and *to* Christs Religion, in both which true *Popery* consists. It is only to my present Purpose, to say, that there is not one point of true *Popery*, that can make a Man a truer Believer, or a better Man, than he was before, in our Communion. And therefore, to what are *we* to be converted? What have we to believe, or what to practice, but what we owe our selves obliged to do before.

How long then, shall we bear these Scribes and Pharisees among us, that are not only unnecessary, but pernicious to us? One would have thought, that the Contrivance of this Day had so justly provok'd our Ancestors, that they would never more have suffered such Intermediaries amongst us; but have executed constantly, the Laws they had justly made against them. 'Tis better indeed to repent of Mercy shewn, than of Severity, but 'tis not good to repent of *that* too often: Instead of quiet and security gain'd by this Relaxation and Remission of *Penal-Laws*, the Nation gave this Faction Breath and new Spirit. Unseasonable Condescensions do sometimes

times provoke to greater Insolence; and Mercy ill displeased, *i. e.* to vile ungenerous Spirits, is look'd upon as Fear, and encourages to bolder Undertakings. 'Tis now some 95 Years since this Conspiracy was to have taken place, yet from that Day to this, they have not lost a foot of Ground among Us in their general Interest; yet from that Day to this, they have been digging down our Walls and Fences, and undermining our Security; contriving the Destruction both of Church and State. The Nation was delivered on the 5th. of November, and on the 6th. we may well presume they began again to carry on the same Design of ruining our Peace, by other Methods, which they have pursued, even to this Day. Our Histories, and our Memories, are full of the Disturbance they have given us; they have contributed, no less than all they could, to the Misfortune both of Prince and People; they occasion'd a world of troubles to One, and terribly embroyl'd Another, and to a Third, their Kindness, Favour, and Assistance were as fatal, as their Malice, and Opposition could have been, had they carried them never so high. Then did this lucky Day shine bright again, and brought a new Deliverance to the Nation; but, would they make it only a Deliverance from a present Storm of Violence, that was ready to pour upon us? Our Enemies live again, and are mighty; it thunder'd for a Day or two, and they were frightned, and retir'd into their dark Recesses, but when the noise was over, they return'd again to their old Business, our Conversion; and have since that
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been busie at it, in despite of all our Laws and Statutes ; we are indeed delivered from their open insults, we would be also from their secret underminings, from their seduction of our People, their *leading captive silly Women, and such as are laden with divers lusts*. What do they here, in a place, where they acknowledge no King, no Church, no Christians, but themselves and Party, unless it be to give us all these things, they think we want ? Why do they haunt our Sick, frequent our Prisons, and creep into Peoples Houses, raise false Reports, detract from our Advantages, exaggerate our Misfortunes, and reproach our Government ? In a word, to compleat our Deliverance, we would intreat those Sons of Zeal, to return again unto their Holy City, and both for ours, and for their own sake, to spare their painful Compassings of Sea and Land, to gain a Profelyte, since they make him, thereby, a worse Christian, and a worse Subject, than they found him.

F I N I S.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

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